

Briefing Document

COVID-19 Central Okanagan Regional Recovery Task Force

The Central Okanagan economy, like economies worldwide, is impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Provided below is an update on the RDCO Economic Development Commission's (COEDC) response to date, planned short term actions and long-term recovery initiatives.

The COEDC is serving the region by establishing and implementing response and recovery plans:

- Communicating the direction and protocols from Interior Health and the provincial and federal levels of government.
- Coordinating with partners to develop a two-phased regional approach:
 - A.) Short-term Response team to help local businesses “weather the storm”
 - B.) Post-Pandemic Economic Recovery strategy to “emerge stronger”

The short-term response phase (1-3 months) will focus on ensuring public health and supporting businesses and the labour force through the immediate impacts of business shutdowns and/or severely reduced revenue. The long-term recovery phase (4-18+ months) will focus on emerging from this crisis stronger and encouraging new opportunities for economic prosperity.

Central Okanagan Regional Recovery Task Force – “Emerging Stronger”

Objective:

To develop and implement a long-term economic recovery plan to reenergize the Central Okanagan economy, retain business base and support employers and workers in getting people back to work as soon as possible following the response phase.

Structure:

- Co-Chaired by Chair Given (RDCO) and Mayor Basran (City of Kelowna). This body will guide a RDCO & COK staff led working group in order to support Economic Recovery of the Central Okanagan.
- Leveraging the information provided by the industry and broad regional community representation of the [COEDC's Advisory Council](#), the Economic Recovery Task Force will be a catalyst for regional economic recovery and in each community.
- COEDC & City of Kelowna staff to provide the Recovery Task Force administrative support in order to facilitate monthly virtual or in-person meetings with Regional Mayors, and Westbank First Nation Chief to communicate actions and status reports.

COEDC Advisory Council

The COEDC Advisory Council will provide COEDC staff with industry and community specific economic recovery needs and opportunities. Industry, Business Associations and local governments are well represented in the 45 person advisory council including representation from:

- 1 elected official and 1 staff appointee from each local government and Westbank First Nation: RDCO, District of Lake Country, City of Kelowna, Westbank First Nation, City of West Kelowna, District of Peachland
- Board Chairs and/or Leadership Staff from each regional Chambers of Commerce/Boards of Trade – Lake Country, Kelowna, Greater Westside, Peachland
- General Manager Community Futures Central Okanagan
- CEO or appointee, Women's Enterprise Centre
- CEO or appointee, Tourism Kelowna
- CEO Southern Interior Development Initiatives Trust (SIDIT)
- CEO Accelerate Okanagan
- Industry Leaders providing expertise from the following sectors:
 - Aerospace
 - Manufacturing
 - Agriculture/Viticulture
 - Health
 - Digital tech
 - Tourism
 - Small business
 - Construction and Development
 - Professional Services

What will the Recovery Task Force do?

- **Provide Central Okanagan Communities a forum for identifying economic recovery needs.**
- **Position and advocate for anticipated stimulus program funding for the Central Okanagan businesses and their employees.**
- **At a political level, communicate Central Okanagan needs with One Voice.**
- **Identify available areas for collaborative projects to support economic recovery.**